

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please rewrite the paragraph on page 8, lines 3-4, as follows:

C' The surface of the copper interconnect layer 1, is covered by the SiN layer 2, and thus is not exposed.

IN THE CLAIMS

Please rewrite claims 2 and 3 as follows:

C2 2. (Once Amended) A method for forming a via hole of a semiconductor device comprising:

a step of forming a first step via hole in a laminated structure formed by a copper layer, an etching-stop layer formed on a surface of said copper layer, and an insulation layer formed on a surface of said etching-stop layer, thereby a bottom of said first step via hole is stopped at said etching-stop layer;

a step of forming a second step via hole continuous with said first step via hole in said etching-stop layer, thereby a bottom of said second step via hole reaching at said surface of said copper layer;

a step of cleaning said second step via hole, said step of cleaning including an annealing process for said via hole; and

a step, after said cleaning, of forming a barrier film on said first and second step via holes, by sputtering;

said method not including exposing said laminated structure to hydrofluoric acid.